

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

*(Constituted under the British Guiana
(Constitution) (Temporary Provisions)
Order in Council, 1952.)*

Wednesday, 15th August, 1953

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT

The Deputy Speaker.

Mr. W. A. Macnic, C.M.G. O.B.E.—
—in the Chair,

Ex-Officio Members:

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.
Mr. M. S. Porcher (Ag.)

The Hon. the Attorney General,
Mr. C. Wylie, Q.C., E.D.

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,
M. F. W. Essex,

*Nominated Members of Executive
Council:*

The Hon. Sir Frank McDavid,
C.M.G., C.B.E., (Member for Agriculture,
Forests, Lands and Mines).

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Member
for Communications and Works).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E.
(Member for Local Government,
Social Welfare and Co-operative De-
velopment).

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj

The Hon. R. C. Tello

Nominated Unofficials:

Mr. T. Lee

Mr. W. A. Phang

Mr. C. A. Carter

Mr. E. F. Correia

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb

Mr. H. Rahaman

Miss Gertie H. Collins

Mrs. Esther E. Dey

Dr. H. A. Fraser

Mr. R. B. Jailal

Mr. Sugrim Singh

Clerk of the Legislature —

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature

—Mr. E. V. Viapree,

Absent:

His Honour the Speaker, Sir
Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E.,
Q.C.—on leave.

The Hon. P. A. Cummings (Mem-
ber for Labour, Health and Housing)
—on leave.

The Hon. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.

Mr. W. T. Lord, I.S.O.—on leave.

Mr. J. I. Ramphal—on leave,

The Deputy Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, 10th August 1956, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MRS. RAATGEVER'S THANKS

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, the Clerk of the Legislature has received a letter from Mrs. Raatgever which I think it proper I should read to you:

"Dear Mr. Crum Ewing,

Will you kindly convey to the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Council my appreciation of the tribute paid by the Council to my late husband, and at the same time express sincere thanks from myself and family for their profound sympathy.

Yours sincerely,
Gwen: Raatgever."

Presentation of Reports and Documents

The Attorney General (Mr. Wylie): I beg to lay on the table:

The British Guiana (Electoral Provisions) Order in Council, 1956, published in the Gazette on the 11th of August, 1956.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES

PLYWOOD COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Mr. Correia: I beg to give notice of the following motion:

"Be it resolved: That this Council accepts in principle the recommendations contained in the Report of the Select Committee appointed in terms of Resolution No. XXXVI of 1955, which was tabled on the 19th July, 1956, and requests the Administration to give favourable consideration to those recommendations."

ORDER OF THE DAY

Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Bill

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Council will resume the debate on the motion for the second reading of the Bill intitled:

"An Ordinance to provide better security of tenure for tenant rice farmers; to limit the rent payable for the letting of rice lands; and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid,"

The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, was speaking when the Council adjourned on Friday last.

Mr. Jailal: When the adjournment was taken I was describing to the Council who was the rice tenant. I have gone through the history of the industry and shown how tenants came into being. The old order has changed and tenantry of rice lands now follows a somewhat different pattern. Gone are the days when the tenant as such had to do communal work on the lands. He no longer wishes to be burdened with having to clean the middle walks and sidelines, and to see to it that the land in general is reasonably well looked after. Time has changed to such an extent that the tenantry is only willing to pay a rental for what they use, leaving aside all the things which their forefathers wanted to do and succeeded in doing.

We could not assess in terms of money the actual value that the tenant added to the land, because at that time we had no true method by which we could arrive at a figure. Later on when we get into Committee stage we can go into what it cost the tenant to change sugar lands into rice lands,

I propose to give a general idea of what it does cost in these days. When lands are undertaken to be broken it has to be broken in beds—rowed off with drains and so forth. That is what the tenant has to do, and it is not a case where he is a full-fledged man—one who has to procure his own amenities and provide himself with food and shelter and the other necessities of life. When the sugar estates were abandoned, these people were literally left to the whims of fate. In order to carry out a programme the estate proprietors had to decide to make advances to them in terms of cash, items of food and, in almost 60 or 70 per cent of the cases, they also had to provide shelter for the tenants.

I can speak with authority about the cost of breaking rice lands because I have, with my own hands, assisted in doing that work and I know that the landlords paid for the various services. Up to about 1932 the cost of breaking these lands was about \$75 per acre, the lands being old Crown lands or abandoned cane lands covered with old cane stumps or sour grass. Apart from being given advances to do the work, the tenants had to be given patches of land which they could plant in order to provide themselves with some little means of assistance. The picture was very gloomy and the tenants in turn told their children to do a little home gardening so that they could carry on with a bare subsistence kind of living. The landlords at that time provided the stuff that came from the shop—flour, sugar, potatoes and things of that sort. For that reason, one considered that an expenditure of \$75 per acre was fairly reasonable for breaking or preparing the land so that rice could be planted on it.

Tenants claim today that these landlords, out of the goodness of their hearts, provide them with certain facilities such as the keeping of oxen on the land, yet it has been said that the landlords are rapacious and that they lend money at usurious rates of interest. I have been told that during the last four years landlords—the same people who sell to the tenants flour, sugar and other things—have been making interest at the rate of anything like 200 per cent on their investments, but I have never had the opportunity of getting conclusive evidence of such rapacious conduct from any person. In the same breath, one could ask who provided the landlord with the means whereby he was able to procure those services for the tenants. My answer to that is that I have laid before this Council, time and again, evidence showing that when the lands were originally sold to the present proprietors it was not a case where there was no use for them and that they were wanted by people in order to pursue a decent livelihood.

It is the same type of man now being described a rapacious landlord who was tempted to buy the land—the abandoned estates—and told: “if you have not got all the money at present you can pay the balance on a mortgage at “so much” per cent.” Actually, the mortgages carried interest at the rate of 10 or 12 per cent and, as a result, the land sometimes reverted to its original owners through failure on the part of the purchaser to meet the interest charges. That was the evil in the land utilisation system, and that has to be considered—the general interest of the landlord. He (the landlord) had to take over a certain amount of responsibility on behalf of the tenant and had to work his land and repay his creditors. So the merchants with shops came into the picture, and also people

[Mr. Jailal]

who had money to lend at high rates of interest.

At the present time there is no one, except this good Government, who would loan a tenant even \$20 if he did not have some kind of security. The banks in this Colony only lend on that kind of security—landed security. People who advanced loans had to secure their money, because Mr. "X" may apply for a loan on a piece of land transported to him and I may lend him 50 per cent. of the amount at a certain rate of interest—say 15 or 20 per cent. On the other hand, he may have advanced money to a crowd of people less secured than himself, their only other security being their God-given hands and their sweat. Therefore the landlord would also be in a very insecure position, since he has given money to people on the security of their names only. There are many instances of that kind—too numerous to mention.

If I were a tenant breaking land at say Golden Fleece, Essequibo, even if the cost of padi was 60c. per bag, by the time I finish I would have required 10 bags or more to feed my family. Then I might realise that rice is merely a subsistence crop, and decide to look for other pastures. As you probably know, Sir, many transactions are merely entries in the books of these landlords—showing that "John Jones" owes him money for breaking land and so on. I know very much about conditions in the Essequibo district, and I also know that on this side of the river—from the Demerara River to Crabwood Creek—the picture is entirely different. There is a practice whereby the tenants have to break the land and make a living from it. There are sugar estates in the area and there are also lands which are rented at a very low rate because the

soil is pegasse and the yield is only three or four bags of padi per acre. It is only with respect to the West Demerara, Leguan, Wakenaam and the Essequibo Coast where there is a system whereby the tenant has to break and the landlord made to face certain obligations with regard to security of tenure.

I was not in the Colony when the Ordinance first came into effect, but I think I was actually at Wakenaam when the people there first approached Sir Gordon Lethem (Governor of the Colony) and clamoured for security as regards rice lands. They claimed that they had given their life-blood on certain lands which were actually taken away from them. All these iniquities were put before the Government and noised throughout the Essequibo Coast, and the new idea took the country by storm. The powers that be felt that it was a wise thing to introduce another system throughout the country. I wish to reiterate that the complaint, to all intents and purposes, was that a man with two strong arms and accustomed to working, did not have sufficient lands to enable him to earn his living. But for the fact that some of these people had the vision and the foresight—as well as the courage—to tackle the matter, there might well have been a worse state of affairs in the area.

It should be remembered that Government, at that time, did absolutely nothing. It was a case where people who had brought benefit to the country and helped production over a course of years were left in the cold. I do not indulge in recrimination, but I feel that a mead of praise ought to be given to these pioneering people. It would be wrong on the one hand if we do not try to make living conditions better for them, but it would be a bigger shame if we introduce measures to squeeze and control them so that they

would be unable to improve their economic condition.

As time went on things changed somewhat. With the growing population there has been the absolute necessity to put more land into cultivation, and lands which were formerly pastures or jungle swamps were brought into use for rice cultivation, so that people may be able to scratch a living from the land. We have only organized one industry—the sugar industry. In the other agricultural industries the farmers are merely scratching a living.

We see large sugar estates today carrying out a system which they refer to as "perquisites." Lands on which they have abandoned sugar cultivation are being given to certain of their workers for the cultivation of rice in order to augment their wages. For such lands this Bill provides that tenants must pay a rental of \$6 per acre. Is it not a fact that some of those lands have been rented for as much as \$18 per acre? I refer to lands stretching from L.B.I. to Buxton and even on to Paradise. For a number of years sugar cultivation has been abandoned on those lands. It was not the intention of the sugar lords to use them again for sugar cultivation, in view of the heavy expenditure that would involve. Those are the lands which it is not the intention of this Bill to control. The sugar estate authorities also have lands aback of the estates which have been completely abandoned.

To put those lands into cultivation would mean an increase of the acreage under sugar cultivation. Haven't we been told in the newspapers that there will be no increase of the acreage under sugar cultivation, as there is no necessity for it? But because those are sugar estate lands the tenants will be charged a rental of \$6 per acre, without any guarantee of drainage or irrigation. Is that fair when there are other lands which other people have leased from

Government at 20 cents per acre but will not be allowed to collect \$6 per acre from their tenants? According to my interpretation of the Bill, people who own an estate of 500 acres, with 300 acres under coconut cultivation and the remainder under rice cultivation, would be entitled to the same conditions as the sugar estates now enjoy.

Sir Frank McDavid: It is unnecessary for the hon. Member to labour that point. I said as much in moving the second reading of the Bill—that the provision which exempts estates which are not merely under rice, embraces not only sugar estates but any other estate on which are planted crops such as coconuts.

Mr. Jailal: I thank the hon. Member for that assurance but I am labouring that point for two reasons. One is that I may have an estate of 500 acres on which my forefathers had planted nothing but coconuts, but a good deal of that land will produce nothing else than water-buffalos. There is, however, a portion of the land on which rice can be cultivated. How would that land be treated? I do not ask the hon. Member to answer that question now; in the Committee stage I will deal with it more exhaustively.

Apart from that there are also lands which some people have held for a large number of years for cattle rearing — lands which can no longer produce cattle because of the fact that, as particularly in the case of No. 42, Abary, there are a number of small cattle owners cramped into a limited space between areas of rice cultivation. Those cattle owners are now being forced to convert their cattle grazing lands into rice fields—uneconomical rice fields as compared with cattle grazing land. I ask the question: is it fair that those cattle owners who were forced by circumstances to turn to rice cultivation

[Mr. Jailal]

should be forced to rent those lands to rice farmers at a figure which would not give them the same returns which they got from cattle grazing? It is a small point, but it is a fact that circumstances also caused some people to rush into rice cultivation because everybody else was doing it.

There is also the matter of fees and rates which are charged for various Government services—drainage, irrigation, income tax and what not. If a tenant gets good drainage and irrigation he should certainly pay for it, but I ask: what services is the landlord giving for the basic rent proposed? I do not know if the basic rent merely provides for the interest a landlord should get on his investment. If that is the case then we will have to change the assessments from time to time. Although landlords are supposed to provide drainage and irrigation there have been some very serious lapses, for instance on the Essequibo Coast. I refer to estates like Three Friends which have been paying drainage and irrigation rates but are not getting those services. As a result the lands are waterlogged. Coconut trees have been planted where rice tenants who had broken the land went away in utter disgust, leaving the landlords in a state of bankruptcy. I am wondering whether this legislation will provide security against lapses of that kind.

I have known many people who have been actively engaged in the rice industry since 1930—26 years ago. A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, but I would like someone to tell me how many more acres of land have been brought into rice cultivation since that time; how many more people have been put on the land since then. It is not the fault of the landlords that there is a compression of so many people in so small an area. It is the fault of Government

that so many more thousand people have had to occupy the same areas year in and year out. In the United States thousands of acres of land used for rice cultivation in one year do not see the rice ploughs in the following year. But that is a country in which the Government subsidizes the industry, and thousands of acres of land are made available to the farmers so as to enable them to rotate their crops. In this country it is not so. Those who own land have been forced by sheer circumstances to continue rice cultivation on their lands. They cannot afford to change their crops; they have not the means to take another chance.

In this connection I would mention an estate like Johanna Cecelia on which, when I was a boy, there were only a few tenants, but today there are a few hundred tenants, because the children of the original tenants had to be provided with pieces of land. This compression has reduced the real economic value of the people's production, because so many people have had to make a living out of the same area of land. I know the answer will be that Government has completed the Block III Scheme and will eventually produce Block II and the Boerasirre schemes, but those schemes are not now in operation. There are thousands of people on the Corentyne clamouring for land, and Members around this table know this because they have spoken at various meetings and heard these people.

Sir Frank McDavid: May I be forgiven for interrupting: at the moment we are debating a specific Bill, for security of tenure for rice farmers, which involves certain restrictions and all that. The hon. Member has embarked on the history of British Guiana and now he is developing a land debate. I wish to call attention to the hon. Member that when I gave notice

of this motion I particularly invited Members' attention to the fact that at a later stage all these various questions about land can be discussed when the Bill dealing specifically with land is brought forward. He need not embark now on a wide range of general land questions as he will have an opportunity for doing so later.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think the hon. Member was trying to develop the question of land hunger and the need for land by various people. We may have our various views about it but I will ask the hon. Member to consider whether the need for distribution of land is relevant to this Bill, as the hon. Member for Agriculture has pointed out.

Mr. Jailal: I will accept your ruling, sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have not ruled: I have offered the hon. Member a suggestion.

Mr. Jailal: I will accept a ruling from the Chair, but I will add this: I am trying to treat the subject as impartially as I can. If I were asked the question, what I would want to see established, I would say they should have brought forward this Bill after we were told about other land questions—

Sir Frank McDavid: I have not risen to a point of order, but merely to try to get in what this particular debate is about. The name of the Bill is, a Bill intituled an Ordinance to provide better security of tenure for tenant rice farmers; to limit the rent payable for the letting of rice lands; and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid. Now, as to the point the hon. Member is trying to develop; there is a land hunger; in fact the whole object of this Bill, going back to 1945, was to satisfy rice tenants because

there was not sufficient land. So what is the purpose at this stage of telling us we should try to do this or that because there is not sufficient land.

Mr. Jailal: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be knocked off my balance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I do not think anyone is trying to knock the hon. Member out.

Mr. Jailal: I am prepared to put my points forward as I see fit. I cannot put them in any other perspective. I will proceed in the same fashion. I maintain there are a lot of Members here who do not know the basic facts. The point I am trying to build up is that rice is an uneconomic proposition and that this Bill is no answer to that. That is also what I am trying to prove. My manner may be round about, but I am going to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that rice is merely a subsistence crop and that this Bill is not the answer—and I am not going to call the Ordinance it deals with the Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Ordinance but the "Rice Lands Control Ordinance". That is the name that should be attached to it! We will have to accept it as such because it clearly controls: it tells one when one is going to rent out his land, how he should rent it, how to receive his rent and eventually, to whom he must rent his land. In point of fact this Bill is trying to control the lives of people, and that is why my heart can never be with it.

I am blaming the fact that we have not got enough land space for the troublous times that have come to us. If we had enough land space so that everybody wishing to do so can spread out, there would be absolutely no reason for any security of tenure. Let me ask this Council this question: is there any reason for security of tenure in places like No. 10 Mahaica? No.

[Mr. Jailal]

any person there will tell you that he has enough land; and the hon. member will bear me out that there are in Central Mahaicony people looking for land while the land abandoned by the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Development Scheme is not planted up for two years. And yet we wonder why certain conditions exist, when we have no land. There are particular areas in which this kind of thing happens. People have planted up their lands with mangoes only to find that mangoes are not as good a crop as they thought it was, and so they have to seek lands elsewhere. People who had land at Queens-town look for land at Mainstay, which is a private estate, and so on. Those are the reasons why security of tenure has come into being. As Mr. Wickham said the other day, there are large tracts of land behind the villages, particularly so in Buxton. Government does not seek to bring those lands within the easy reach of the Buxton people. The people have to accept a job with the sugar estate and with the little money they earn, buy half an acre of land. That is what throws the full burden of responsibility on people with small acreages, and they are forced therefore to find some means by which they can protect themselves.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the hon. Member does not mind my intervening; as he is a Member of a certain Board, then he must be aware that that Board, with Government's assistance is taking steps to provide adequate drainage for Buxton, and I think it would be right and proper for the hon. Member to so inform the Council. I did not want to intervene, but the hon. Member should give the whole picture.

Mr. Jailal: I detest being a knave, but I hope somebody would take me up on the points I am going to make a

little later on and give me better ground.

Having said all this, and having also said that although this is a country with much land we have very little land for a lot of people, I have pointed out that rice work is a last resort and there are many people around me who would never like to be a tenant farmer—one of those persons who takes about five acres of land and has to eke an existence out of it.

The people who have been able to make some money and show some rewards from rice are those who have been able to cut their cost. They have been able under particularly good weather conditions to make some money on their land and that money carries them through the years. This is no idle statement, but we are today experiencing a shortage of rice in contractual quantities. We did not expect locally that we would be short. A factor behind this is the inclement weather, which caused us not to get the yield we used to have, and then there is to the best of my knowledge a lot of non-planting. I have been hearing in this Council that we have been planting too much rice, and now we are faced with the fact that may be this year or next year (because next year, the opinion is, we will probably be in the same position)—

Sir Frank McDavid: Whose view it is? The Department of Agriculture and its Ministry have always been of the opinion that we should plant more rice.

Mr. Jailal: I have sat here and heard warnings. We have heard people telling us, "please do not plant more rice, as we are going to have too much of it and we would not know what to do with it." But these things do not actually come within focus at this time,

although they can form a factual basis for this "Control Ordinance." If we are going to have control, let it be control that will be in the best interests of all concerned. So our basis must be correct.

Mr. Correia: Is the hon. Member changing the name of the Ordinance now being discussed?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: For the purposes of the debate, I assume.

Mr. Jailal: I was forced to remember the Fisheries Bill, but I do not want to feel I am dealing with it in the same light. Are we not to have regard for circumstances and look at the various factors to be dealt with in view of the fact that this new Ordinance—the Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Ordinance—is likely to come into force shortly? Is it not true that it would tie up some of the ideas we have been speaking about? We are considering the question of giving more land to the tenant if he wishes but instead of that, we find in this Bill such things as Assessment Committees and other factors that can be dealt with as we go along—clause by clause. The main fear in my mind is that the recommendations contained in the report of the Inter-departmental Committee will not stand up to the situation that confronts us. The Committee did not seem to have had the opportunity of going thoroughly into the question of what rice lands can produce. I was at pains to point out that at the outset the industry was started as a means of subsistence, and that up to the present time the farmers are carrying on primarily for the sake of what they call domestic consumption rice, or rice for domestic consumption.

If anyone wants to hurt a peasant farmer let him take away the oppor-

tunity to produce this rice, because he depends upon it for most of his food and also as a means of getting a little work. That is the structure upon which the whole life of the tenant farmer is based. I have stated previously that the people who are making money out of rice are the people who plant large blocks of land at a time with the use of mechanical methods. Those who plant small areas and cannot afford to use mechanical methods are only planting at a subsistence level. If anyone went into figures—as was done by the President of a certain organisation—it would be found that padi produced by peasant farmers cost away and above \$5 per bag, and these things prove how uneconomical the production of rice could be. I make that statement in this Council and I am willing to prove it at any time. I go further and say that if a tenant farmer particularly wants to plant two acres of rice in a place like Essequibo and can do so at a cost of less than \$20 per acre, I would say that such a man is a magician.

It is impossible for a landlord to make more than these men although he might be considered to be in the most favourable position. I mentioned all these things in the course of my address in Finance Committee—and Members know how rife I can become in this matter. I have been told that perhaps I want to set myself up as a landlord but far be it from me, because I have had to share the sorrows of these people. I am going to be very generous, however, and say that the Bill before the Council is a good one. The Committee has made an honest attempt to solve the problem, but the real root has not been tackled. We have not examined what is really the canker at the root of the problem, and that is the need for land on the part of the rice farmer, whereon he would be able to produce at a cost of anything like \$15, \$18 or

[Mr. Jailal]

\$20 per acre. If those who had to deal with the cultivation and production of rice all their lives want to be absolutely truthful, they would say that owing to the many difficulties of transportation, soil and other problems, it is impossible for the small man to make handsome returns as a rice farmer.

Mr. Correia: The hon. Member (Mr. Jailal) has said that the small man cannot exist on less than what he is getting for his padi or rice and, on the other hand, he cannot afford to pay more than what he is paying for his land.

Sir Frank McDavid: The hon. Member answered the question himself. He said there is no answer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member did give an answer; he said there is no need for an answer.

Mr. Jailal: I have said that until the production of rice is completely mechanised it would be an uneconomical crop. There could be no doubt that it is uneconomical because the best planters in the world—the people with the best facilities that can be obtained—and some of the best experts have proved that. What more do hon. Members want to convince them? The U.S.A. has used all these things so that they could make it an economical crop, but they have not succeeded.

Sir Frank McDavid: I may assure the hon. Member that Government is aware of the fact that the United States has had in force a very elaborate plan for the production and subsidization of rice and that they are testing out some entirely new methods. That country has gone further than any other in this respect. Now, however, they also have a plan whereby a farmer is being paid

to plough his crop into the ground and destroy his rice farm in order to see if he would get "so many" bags per acre. But, can British Guiana afford to do that?

Mr. Jailal: I never inferred that British Guiana can afford to do that; I have always said that British Guiana is a poor country. I have also said that because of the fact that the U.S.A. has put its plan into operation, it proves conclusively that the industry is not as strong as it might appear to be. I think all the countries in the East are in need of some support in this respect. Does everyone know that all these countries—China, Japan, the Straits Settlement and others — are nothing more than countries in which poor people barely exist? Wherever one finds all these millions of people forced to live on the land and engaging in agriculture along uneconomic lines — producing things like rice, millet and other uneconomic crops one usually finds a very low standard of living among the people. I guess people are going to ask me how the people on the Corentyne have been able to build such beautiful new homes and buy their trucks and so on, or how has it come about that Sandbach Parker and Coy. are selling two Ferguson tractors per day?

I will answer that question in two different ways. This Council should never forget that the Rice Marketing Board is part of this pauperised industry and as such it has to follow the trend of the times in order to make its operations successful to some extent. Therefore, it has had to introduce mechanized methods. It is worthy of note that the withdrawal by the R.M.B. of assistance to the farmers by way of guarantees and securities for machinery has had serious repercussions in the industry and we are seeing these today. Ploughs and tractors are being taken

away from service because the farmers cannot afford to pay for them. After trailers were taken away the price of machine parts rose sharply, and that is a problem which landlords and tenants alike have been tackling from time to time. These parts are now costing the farmers five and six times the original price, and that increases the cost of production all the time. Several persons have been writing letters to the newspapers begging for a little more time for the farmers because they could not pay for these things, but they only get two years within which to do so. When a tractor—or any other article is seized the farmer not only loses the use of it, but he also loses all that he has paid on it. All those are circumstances that should be mentioned about the production of rice and they would really give an answer to some of the problems we hear about.

I must, however, mention some of the other things which I feel are not working well in the industry. I have spoken about tractors and now I want to speak about milling. I think it is a shame that although the Engberg nutters were designed such a long time ago for milling rice, it was not found possible to put heaters into them for the use of the local miller. It is only since the Rice Marketing Board came into operation that we have seen a full-scale mill in operation—one that would dry and mill with the same operation. And I think our Agriculture Department should exert all its efforts in order to reduce the difficulties that have to be faced in these matters. Yesterday I saw some very good rice from Anna Regina, but from enquiry I learnt that it was milled elsewhere—at Adventure. This milling problem is one that is adding to the distress and sorrows of the farmers, and something should be done about it.

In the days gone by I used to buy a huller knife for 6 shillings, but today one has to pay \$3, \$4 or \$5 for one. The price of huller strips has also gone up tremendously—to four or five times what it was before—while milling fees have risen throughout the Colony and are now in the vicinity of \$2.50 per bag. In my day—when I sat at a huller—rice was milled at 60¢ per bag, and all that goes to show how uneconomical it is to produce the commodity at the present time. Although the price has gone up the many commitments of the farmer have also gone up.

Sir Frank McDavid: I am most interested in what the hon. Member is saying. I wonder if the hon. Member can take that a little further and say how much goes into the miller's hands. If he says that \$2.50 per bag is the average milling fee, I think it would be of some value to the Council to know how much of that is actual profit.

Mr. Jailal: That is why I was trying to show that the miller himself cannot tell the cost. There is difficulty in the matter and even the miller finds himself in that difficulty. I would not like to force this on the Council, but I would like to say that 80 per cent. of the millers would not be able to tell anyone up to now what they made last year out of milling rice. They really could not, because of a series of circumstances, and I would say that a miller would not get more than a nett profit of 60 cents per bag. I make that statement having regard to all that happens.

Sir Frank McDavid: In other words, that is the real profit.

Mr. Jailal: Having regard to wear and tear, he gets 60 cents per bag. So that a miller who gets 10,000 bags of padi makes a profit of \$6,000, but it must not be forgotten that he has had

[Mr. Jailal]

his children sweeping up the rice, and in the computation of the cost of rice production regard must be paid to the fact that a farmer, his wife and children all work without pay. Therefore, when I made the statement about \$20 per acre I meant that they were all working for nothing, except that they get a certain quantity of rice for domestic consumption. In the case of the miller it must be taken into consideration that he has his father or uncle watching the mill.

Taking all these things into consideration I feel that there must be some other solution. We cannot leave our landlords to be continuously receiving rents which are driving them into bankruptcy. On the other hand, are we going to put rice tenants in such a position that people are going to accuse Government of carrying on feudalism? I hope we will not allow it to be said that at one time Government put landlords against tenants and *vice versa*. I warn that it could be said that that is what is being perpetrated. At one time tenants were in the key position, and landlords were literally up against the fence in many instances. I would not like to think that that is even the remotest objective of this Bill.

There are one or two things that can happen to rice in this country, and I think I see the light of dawn. The Director of Agriculture should be told "Here is a piece of land; is it suitable for rice or coffee?" That should be the scheme. The map shows that we have a lot of land lying idle. I say: send the draglines in and put 20 bulldozers on to scrape it down, then plant the next week. In the Canje savannahs we could plant more corn now than British Guiana could ever use, but nobody has stirred about it. Corn would help rice along and stop the present compression

on rice lands. If we were able to widen our fields and give the farmers all the land they require, providing an average of 10 acres per farmer, it would not be necessary to fix high rentals or to take land from a landlord and give it to his tenant. That, I believe, is our primary answer to the problem of renting lands.

Secondly, I would recommend that drainage and irrigation, in respect of which our rice farmers are paying rates at an average of \$2.50 per acre, should immediately be made a colonial question. It is utterly wrong to pass those rates on to the backs of the tenant farmers who produce a crop which is subsidized to the consumer. As was done in the case of the sewerage scheme in Georgetown, which was paid for by the whole Colony, I suggest that drainage and irrigation should be made a colonial question, because the whole country eats the produce of the land and pays less for its rice than what it is sold for in the West Indies market. Therefore the local consumers should be willing to pay a small fraction more for their rice. They should bear their share of the responsibility for seeing that the crop is produced for them to eat it. I confess that words fail me to put it stronger. If that were done immediately the cost of production of rice would be reduced by \$2.50 per acre to the tenant farmer. I know it will be asked: why protect rice by such an elaborate scheme? But are we going to stop there? Aren't we also going to protect plantains and ground provisions in course of time? Even so, if drainage and irrigation were made a colonial question, would it not embrace all the agricultural activities of this country?

Landlords will have to borrow money again to put their rice lands in proper condition. Money is exceedingly short in this country, but not to the

villages and the Government-controlled estates. The Credit Corporation lends money to Tom, Dick and Jones, but to a landlord who has to do a tremendous amount of work on 20,000 or 25,000 acres of abandoned cane land to prepare it for rice cultivation, it is not lending money. I venture to suggest that the Corporation is not lending money because it is considered not secure. The inflated price that land seems to have does not, apparently, give the Corporation the security it requires. I do not know of more than two or three persons who have been lent sizeable sums of money by the Corporation to put their estates in order. Yet Government is propounding in this Bill a system by which, if a landlord puts his lands in order, he could demand the maximum rental.

What is to happen if he cannot put this land in proper order? That is one of the things to which we must address our minds. I recommend that Government should see to it that landlords are granted long-term loans for the purpose of putting the internal works on their estates in order. What are crop lien loans to a landlord? I say it is absolutely silly to offer a landlord a crop lien loan when the village alongside his rice lands, and the villagers who eat the rice he provides, are given loans by the Credit Corporation. Imagine a place like Craig, for instance, a little pagasse-ridden piece of land which will one day be washed away if river defence is not provided, being granted a loan of \$75,000!

This place is smaller than one of the ordinary estates I mentioned, like Cove and John. If \$75,000 were spent on Cove and John it would have a chance of becoming a first-class piece of property, well drained and everything else. Do hon. Members think anybody would dare to loan Cove and John

\$75,000? Nobody would. Do hon. Members know why? Because it is a private estate and the few people who live there do not have as sure an existence as those on the East Bank, where they say, "there's Diamond—as long as Diamond is there we won't die."

Money is not lent to the poor Esse- quibians. We refuse to hear them. Why? Because the pattern of their livelihood is prescribed, and they have to live in the same way their forefathers before them lived. They have no right to ask; some suppose that they are not children of this Colony. Everything they have had to do has been a gamble. Their estates have dwindled. When we take into account what it costs today to plant sugar cane we can understand how the abandonment of estates by landlords among them have come about. There is a lot of talk about the capriciousness of landlords, but they are in fact almost in the same position as that in which the tenant is bound.

These three recommendations are my main answers to this Bill, but I have two other points which I must place before this Council. Government has now embarked on large rice estates and is a landlord over several hundred people. I am told that it is not envisaged that Government estates must come within the Ordinance. If this does come to pass, then I feel Government would be creating something terrible for itself. We would be forcing somebody to accept something and when it comes to our own self we are unwilling to accept it.

Sir Frank McDavid: It would be quite impossible for me to answer the hon. Member's speech in all its details, and I therefore have to seize the opportunity now and again to rise and answer some. The hon. Member knows fully well that it is not the practice, nor is it correct legal procedure to place

[Sir Frank McDavid]

the Crown within the obligation of the law, but I have given the assurance that the Government estates will and must conform with all the obligations and restrictions which are in this Bill, and it is well known that in a number of the Government tenancies there exists a fixed land rent which is very much lower indeed than those set out in this Bill. This lower rent will continue. So there is no necessity to make a point that the Government is escaping the provisions of the law which it is seeking to enact.

Mr. Jailal: I am a layman—it is my brother who is a lawyer. I can only know from what I see and what I am told. To use Mr. Carter's line of argument, *ignotium est non excusa legis*, and when the law is placed before the judge he will interpret it according to his learning though it may be pointed out to him that when the law was being made, this or that motivated it or that "we had this or that in mind". This law will be controlling the lives of a good section of our community; let us then make it in such a fashion that history will not call us names.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: May I rise at this stage—

Mr. Jailal: I am not giving way. I feel that if Government estates as such — land settlement schemes—are going to be sites of rice planting in the main, then they must come within it. I have had to represent cases where, as soon as the price of rice went up the landlord, knowing he could not raise his rent automatically, increased the charges on his tenant for keeping his cow in the pasture, or for allowing his boat with padi to pass in the trench or for the building he occupied. Is Government going to do these things? I remember that at Cane Grove, although I tried to convince the people otherwise, as soon

as rice went up by \$2.77 things were changed; provisions became costlier, office boys got more money, and so forth. Consequently the land price in a place like that had to go up. Are we going to allow that to happen again?

We write into the law that certain people, because they are engaged primarily in one type of agricultural pursuit will not be considered as rice landlords. Must we accept that Government should come into this category although its estates will be planting rice? Let us not say that Government cannot be sued, for that will not hold water. The Director of Agriculture is a part of Government. If the Drainage and Irrigation Department makes a bad contract it can be sued. Government anywhere—I do not know of Russia—can be sued. If Government becomes a landlord let it not be a usurious or rapacious landlord but a shining example and a model landlord. Land Settlement Schemes have been established partly for the purpose of Government showing people how to live more progressively and I implore Members here to allow that to come to pass. Windsor Forest is running at a dead loss to this country, and as long as the people pay \$6 per acre it will continue to be so; drainage and irrigation is not within the reach of people in other parts of the country — we are going wrong if we continue these things and I will never be party to them.

I feel that I am on very firm ground, and in order that these proposals may be accepted and their value realized we must treat the landlord, regardless of who he is, on the same basis. I should also call to the attention of Members the fact that thousands of acres of lands, including rice lands: Anna Regina *cum annexis*, the West Coast estates, Garden of Eden and Mara, Boerasirie, Blocks II and III and P'n. Onverwagt, all owned by Govern-

ment, will be thrown into the hands of Government Departments and would not come within this controlling measure. How can this Council reasonably accept that? Crown lands have taken in second depth lands from the proprietors. These, too, will be thrown into the hands of the Land Settlement Department. Then I am told that the major portion of the Colony's lands would not come within this law. The "smaller boys" are being told, "here, you stay in this enclosure."

I could never agree with that. I have said that this is one of the things which must be set right. If Government is not going to accept the laws that are laid down, then Government must get out of business and give the lands to the people. I have said so in Finance Committee and I advise the same thing here. We should not hold the lands and say that because we have Government Departments we are within the law. There is no reason why a man should drive a car at 50 m.p.h. and say that he is the Commissioner of Police, if the law says that every person should drive at 10 m.p.h. If Government intend to become rice landlords they must come within the Ordinance like everyone else. I want to warn this Government very seriously that they might very well cause a riot in this country if nothing is done to establish a good land settlement scheme. I do not think I should labour the point more. I am only pleading with Members—that is what I am actually doing—because I am sure that all of them with two exceptions, possibly, are acquainted with the conditions prevailing at the present time.

I am suggesting land settlement schemes because I have had the unfortunate experience of having to keep the people quiet. I have had to tell them that the charge being made by Government is justified because Government

has had to "bull-doze" coconut trees and so on from the land, and therefore their rent had to be increased. I give the warning because Government was going blindfolded into land settlement scheme — something which could have meant their own downfall. We have quite a lot of people whom we could put on the land and we should do so under conditions whereby they would not become land "soldiers" themselves. It is easy for applicants to run into arrears, but I have made my position clear for the benefit of the recruits. I desire also to point out that in the case of the lands for which a charge of \$6 per acre without guarantee has been recommended, this should be subject to careful consideration otherwise we would only prolong certain undesirable features existing at the present time.

We know that the previous Government used the question of rice lands as a pillar of their political platform, and that they did so to very good advantage. On this occasion we are going out to the people, but we do not want to do the right thing. If a man engaged in primary production says he intends to "plant" snakes, then we should let him put snakes on the land for five years or any other limited period. At the same time he should not be allowed to carry that on forever, otherwise they would be hoodwinking the people. I feel that all these lands should be declared as rice lands at once and brought under the Ordinance, being charged for as such. Otherwise, they should be sold by Government and not kept as an uneconomical proposition. I know that this Government has acted on technical advice—and I am speaking particularly of the front lands. Government should say that if an area of land is going to be kept as a rice estate it should be established as such within five years—the period stipulated in this Bill. If

[Mr. Jailal]

not, we would be sharing good grapes to some people and sour grapes to others. I cannot put it in any better light.

Mr. Correia: Before the hon. Member resumes his seat I would like to get some information from him. I have been hearing about land settlement and Government lands, but I do not know whether *that has* been mentioned in this Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Mover of the motion has already answered the question, but the hon. Member (Mr. Correia) may not have been in his seat at this time. The hon. Member for Agriculture explained that although it is not so stated in the Bill, Crown and Colony lands cannot be subject to the Ordinance.

Sir Frank McDavid: That is so, sir; and I went on to explain the conditions under which those lands would be rented.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the hon. Member (Mr. Jailal) is holding the floor and wishes to continue, I will ask him to proceed. We cannot have a repetition of questions and answers on points of information.

Mr. Jailal: I am glad that the hon. Member (Mr. Correia) has got from the Member for Agriculture the fact that Government does not intend to yolk itself to this Bill, because I repeat that Government will soon find out whether it is right or wrong. These lands are supposed to be made available in various parts of the Colony and I would like to know whether it is a question that rice lands would not be able to pay for the people that could manage

them. I think that Government, with all the facilities at its disposal—several Departments and advisers including experts with free and easy access—should be able to do everything much easier than the layman. If a layman wants to use a dragline on his land — even on a small portion which he has enclosed—it would be necessary for him to obtain permission and deposit \$1,000 before he gets it. That is why I am labouring the particular matter, and I hope hon. Members will support me. I am sure that my argument can stand the light of day and remain forceful for a long time. My voice is the voice of the people and not that of Jailal.

This argument that Government lands and Government-owned estates should come under this same Ordinance, is that of the majority of the people who would go into land settlement schemes and we must guarantee them that the law would apply to everyone. We should not allow them to be able to say that we are renting land at \$6 per acre in one part of the Colony and in another part of the Colony we are doing so at \$12 or \$18 per acre. Such a system would be wrong. It is possible that someone might try to make me appear ludicrous by stating that I am advancing fancy ideas in spite of the fact that Government estates are running at a loss. Except in the case of the West Coast estates, however, Government estates are producing reasonable rentals, particularly in the case of Cane Grove where there is an upward revision of the rents wherever Government wishes to do so. If a truck charges one cent more for transporting a bag of padi from that estate, the rent is increased as a result. Some of the tenants are paying as much as \$18 per acre for their land, but we should not allow that. I shall still warn the hon. Mover on the point, because by April next year we might still be in

this difficulty. Only recently the late Mr. Raatgever gave me the assurance that some effort would be made to bring relief to these people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Whatever the late hon. Member (Mr. Raatgever) did say, I think the hon. Member (Mr. Jailal) should bear it in mind that members of the Government speak for the Government and not for anyone else. Any assurance given by the hon. Mover of the motion is on behalf of Government, and not for himself personally.

Mr. Jailal: I have attended a British school and have been taught by the British; and I have been told that any time a thing has been stated in black and white it should be regarded as an assurance given. That is the assurance I have taken. I know of a case where people were made a promise by a certain Governor—something referred to in a newspaper—but because the people could not show that it was recorded in black and white—in the form of a letter—Government backed out of it. Some of the men concerned were sent for, but after many years the assurance was never carried out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member is not speaking about this Council, because any assurance given by us would be given in writing. The hon. Member's case, therefore, is not parallel.

Mr. Jailal: That was a case, however, where an assurance was given, sir. I may not be a politician very much longer, but I would prefer, so long as I have the right to represent the people by my vote, to see an assurance given in writing.

I am asking hon. Members to be careful how they vote the lives of many

people down the stream. In another part of the Bill Members will see provision for the appointment of Assessment Committees. I remarked earlier that Government does not apparently cherish the feeling that some of the people who plant rice are capable of discussing intelligently matters concerning their livelihood. I will make the same point with reference to the appointment of Assessment Committees.

Sir Frank McDavid: Would the hon. Member not let us get on and leave such points to be dealt with in the Committee stage? Why is it necessary to elaborate on such points in a debate on the principle of the Bill?

Mr. Jailal: Your Honour, I would like to have a ruling on the point, because the more I am interrupted the longer I shall have to speak.

Sir Frank McDavid: The only other interruption I would make would be to move "That the question be now put", but I would not want to do that.

Mr. Jailal: I do not wish to be rude, but if the hon. Member thinks I speak nonsense I do not think the rest of the Council is of that opinion. I have had more experience of the rice industry than most Members here, and perhaps more than the hon. Member himself, and it is right that he should pay attention to what I have to say.

(Sir Frank McDavid immediately left the Chamber, returning to his seat shortly afterwards).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Will the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, please proceed?

Mr. Jailal: We are in debate and I am only warning that if I am not listened to now I will not repeat what I am saying. It is rather unfortunate that this Government has come to such

[Mr. Jailal]

a pass that "Ministers" cannot sit down and take the criticism that is being offered. This has happened to me twice in this Council, and I regard it as an insult to my intelligence, and an insult to the office I now hold. I think it is very wrong. We have seen this particular Member walk out of the Chamber before. I shall report his action to the Governor. I am not going to take this; I will report it to the Governor myself. I am speaking very dispassionately. I am not trying in any way to abuse or to be rude to the hon. Member. I am endeavouring to focus attention on a matter of serious concern to a lot of people. I know it because I have lived among them; I have lived their lives. Becoming angry does not help the situation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Will the hon. Member please proceed to speak on the Bill, as he was doing. I observe that the hon. Member is looking at the clock. I have no doubt that no other Member desires to speak this afternoon, but whether the hon. Member takes his seat at five minutes before five o'clock, or one minute before five o'clock I shall call on the next hon. Member who wishes to speak. Will the hon. Member please proceed?

Mr. Jailal: I propose to proceed, sir, but you will admit that it is rather embarrassing — these frequent interruptions knock one off what he wishes to say. I am speaking to the country as a whole and I think I should not be interrupted all the time.

I will leave the Government estates and the sugar estates for a while, to refer now to the one and only Rice Development Company who are holders of land. The time must come when the Rice Development Co., will have to give out

those lands. They must share them out, because they are losing money. The only section of their operations that is making money is the mill. Therefore we must decide whether that is a Government concern, or whether it should be treated as a private company, and as such should come within the framework of these recommendations. I want to make that clear, because I have stated before, without a shadow of a doubt, that had that Company not withdrawn from rice cultivation 1,500 acres of land without any notice, this country would not have been in the embarrassing position it is in today. I make that statement. I am charging the Company with having done something which may discourage people who are planting acres of land on a gamble.

The Attorney-General: I rise to a point of order! This is a Bill to fix conditions of tenure as between landlords and tenants with regard to rice lands. May I ask your ruling, sir, as to whether it is relevant to run over all these fields, dealing with something that has nothing to do with the subject of the Bill?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I feel that the hon. Member who is on the floor is endeavouring to cover the objects of the Bill in the widest possible scope, and he is certainly taking his field as wide as it could be. I think that earlier in the debate there was reference by the hon. Member to the question of a rice shortage at the present time. At that time the hon. Member did not see fit to suggest any reason for it. I feel also that the hon. Member is laying the foundation for what he has said by alleging that 1,500 acres of land previously under rice cultivation is not now being planted. In the circumstances I think the hon. Member is in order.

The Attorney-General: On the question of the relationship between landlord and tenant?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the question of the cultivation of rice. It refers to the letting of rice lands and the security of land for rice. Will the hon. Member continue, please.

Mr. Jalial: I have seen amendments flying here before we started to debate this Bill—before we reach the Committee stage. I suppose I will have to go over this argument all over again.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I shall have to rule the hon. Member out of order. I have asked him to proceed. Once the Chair has ruled, please proceed from where you stopped.

Mr. Jalial: In this Bill provision is made for various Assessment Committees, and I have pointed out that the personnel of those Committees is to be made up of Government officers and certain other members. I recommend to the hon. Member that the last two members of the Committee should not be named by the Governor or by any Government Department. Let the people have a chance; let them have a chance to submit a panel of names for themselves. It is done by the Rice Producers' Association for the purpose of its representation on the Rice Marketing Board. Let the rice producers be able to select whom they want. Whatever decisions are made by these Assessment Committees will be law. It is not a case where their decisions will have to go before a Judge. Whatever they decide will be carried. Give the rice producers an opportunity to submit a panel of names. If we do not teach them on the lower rungs of the ladder they would never be able to climb. It is a forum in which we should teach them to deal with their own affairs.

There are other points on which I will have to dwell when we are dealing with amendments of the Bill in the Committee stage. I have endeavoured at some length to put forward a case on

even balance. I have shown where there was merely a small margin of difference, and that only economic conditions have widened the gap between landlord and tenant. I went on and tried to prove with all seriousness that rice, as planted and being continued primarily as a peasant crop, is nothing more than a subsistence crop. I have said that landlords and tenants cannot afford to undertake greater improvement of the industry, and I have recommended three measures. I can only hope that before this Bill is finally passed Members will seriously consider all that I have said. I shall be forced by circumstances to agree to the acceptance of this Bill after it is amended, but I shall only agree on one condition — that the Ordinance is revised from year to year until we find a better solution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak on the motion for the second reading of the Bill? If no other Member desires to speak I shall ask the hon. mover to reply. I am sorry for those hon. Members who have not seen it fit to remain. They may have anticipated that we would not finish the debate on the second reading this afternoon.

Mr. Lee: In that case would it not be advisable to adjourn now?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: So long as I occupy the Chair I propose to sit the full hours of the session. Hon. Members who propose to speak on the second reading have no justification for leaving. No Member has passed up any note to me through the Clerk, giving any particular reason for being absent. The only Member who has done that did so before the meeting started. I refer to the hon. Member, Mr. Bobb, but he did not indicate that he wished to speak on the second reading. There-

[Mr. Deputy Speaker]

fore I propose to call on the hon. Member for Agriculture, the mover of the Bill, to reply.

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines). I do not think I am doing an injustice to any Member by accepting Your Honour's invitation to reply at this stage, because I know that Mr. Sugrim Singh intends to speak on the Bill, but from his last words to me I gathered that he intends to speak on specific clauses of the Bill in the Committee stage. But to begin my reply at this stage is somewhat embarrassing, because of the exceedingly depressing speech which we have listened to at such length from Mr. Jallal—depressing not only from its length but from the implication which I, and I am sure other hon. Members, gained from it, that our rice industry is just not economic. That is the very serious inference to be drawn from that speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before the hon. Member proceeds, let me say that I was not aware that Mr. Sugrim Singh had a special reason for leaving, and that he intended to speak on the Bill. If the hon. Member for Agriculture is requesting that he should not reply now, and that the Council should adjourn until tomorrow in order that Mr. Sugrim Singh may be given an opportunity to speak on the Bill, I will grant that request.

Sir Frank McDavid: I was not suggesting that Mr. Sugrim Singh intended to speak. I said he spoke to me before he left, saying that he was supporting the Bill but would like to have some points explained, and perhaps would make some observations him-

self. I gathered that he intended to do so in the Committee stage. That is why I said I had no embarrassment in accepting Your Honour's invitation to reply this afternoon, but I went on to say that I was a little depressed at having to reply now.

Let me make this clear: I am going to think about the implication of Mr. Jallal's statement tonight. It worries me greatly, because a great deal of our development planning, our transactions and relationship with our neighbours in the West Indies for the sale of our second agricultural product in this country, is based on the economic production of rice, and if at this moment when the price is still reasonable, we are going to be told in such strong language that it pays neither the landlord, nor the tenant, nor the miller, then what are we doing? We must have a complete reorientation of our policy. I do not accept it at all. I do not believe that our rice will reach that stage. I want to say that tomorrow most emphatically, because if that were the case the Financial Secretary and I would have to think again, and think very hard, about our Development Programme. That is a study which I would not like to take up this afternoon, and if you will permit me, sir, I would move the adjournment now until tomorrow.

The Deputy Speaker: I think hon. Members have been told by circular letter that the Finance Committee meeting cannot take place this week owing to the absence of the Development secretary from Georgetown. He will be back next week.

Council is adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.